HUD newsletter
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
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Current Trends

The *Labor Department* reported that construction wages continued to advance at a moderate rate in the third quarter. Union construction wage rates in larger cities rose 1.2 percent in the July-September period... the smallest for this quarter since 1967 except for the period of the wage freeze in 1971. Wages were 8.3 percent above year-earlier levels... a smaller year-over-year increase than in the first and second quarters. Counting fringe benefits, construction labor costs were 9.6 percent above year-earlier rates in the third quarter. The peak rise was 13.5 percent in the first quarter of 1971.

HUD's November 1 opinion survey of conditions in the mortgage market showed that nationally... the secondary market price for immediate delivery of ***HUD/FHA***-insured new-home mortgages with 30-year terms and minimum downpayments advanced one and one-half points from a month earlier to $96.0 per $100 of outstanding loan amount. The equivalent gross yield to investors at this price was 9.53 percent... a drop of 21 basis points from the October 1 yield. The national average interest rate contracted to be paid by the borrowers for conventional first mortgages was unchanged. The national rate for both new- and existing-home contracts remained at 9.25 and 9.30 percent, respectively. For the two previous monthly surveys, increases between 10 and 15 basis points had been reported. In comparison with a year earlier, significant improvement for the home buyer applies in all areas of the country.

The *FHLBB* reported that interest rates on conventional home mortgages rose moderately from early September to early October... but that other loan terms such as maturity and loan-to-price-ratio generally eased. The average effective interest rate on conventional loans closed for purshasing newly-built homes increased by 7 basis points to 9.01 percent... while the average rate on previously-occupied homes was up 5 basis points to 9.18 percent. During the first 5 business days of October, the average effective interest rate on conventional mortgages closed by major lenders for purchasing newly-built, single-family homes was 9.01 percent... up from 8.94 percent in early September... but below the 9.17 percent year ago average.

The total population of the United States (including Armed Forces overseas) was about 213,983,000 on September 1, 1975... according to estimates released by the ***Census Bureau***. This figure represents an increase of 1,783,000... or 0.8 percent... over the estimate for the corresponding month a year ago... and an increase of 172,000 over the previous month. The monthly gain was the result of a natural increase of 135,000 (excess of births over deaths), and estimated net civilian immigration of 34,000. The September 1, 1975, total population represents an increase of 9,649,000 over the population on April 1, 1970, the date of the census upon which these estimates are based.

Urban renewal project notes totaling $343.6 million... representing 102 local issuing agencies... were sold in mid-November at an average interest rate of 3.472 percent... a sharp drop from the average interest rate for the $242.7 million of project notes sold in early October... which was 3.903 percent.

Earthquake Study Issued

Studies for Seismic Zonation of the San Francisco Bay Area. . . **which reports on new techniques for reducing earthquake losses in the quake-prone San Francisco Bay area of California. . . has been issued jointly by *HUD* and the *U.S. Geological Survey of the Interior Department*.** The techniques can also be used in 38 other States facing various degrees of similar risk.

These scientific methods. . . which provide a basis for *seismic zonation*. . . are described in the report.

Seismic zonation is the mapping of earthquake hazard areas. It classifies areas according to their susceptibility to, and the degree of potential damage from, such earthquake effects as ground faulting, ground shaking, landsliding, and flooding. The 9-county Bay study area. . . with varying degrees of earthquake risk. . . covers some 7,000 square miles and has a population of more than 3 million people.

By knowing the potential hazards for each area, planners and decisionmakers can develop regional zone-by-zone land-use and construction procedures such as building codes and designs that enable structures to withstand earthquake hazards. This knowledge is vital to the location of critical structures such as nuclear power plants, dams, and schools in areas with lesser potential for quake hazards.

Emphasizing what could happen if urbanization continues without regard to earthquake hazards, the report presents a scenario of possible effects in an area south of San Francisco resulting from a hypothetical earthquake registering 6.5 on the Richter scale.

The *Seismic Zonation* report is one of a series of reports resulting from the *San Francisco Bay Region Environment and Resources Planning Study* begun by ***HUD*** and the ***USGS*** in 1970 and still underway. The study is developing methods for the use of earth-science information in support of land-use planning and decisionmaking for application in the Bay Region and throughout the Nation.

Copies of the report. . . *USGS Professional Paper 941-A*. . . may be ordered prepaid for $2.80 each from the *U.S. Geological Survey, Branch of Distribution*, 1200 South Eads St., Arlington, Va. 22202. . . or may also be purchased at the *U.S. Geological Survey's Public Inquiries Office*, 504 Custom House, 555 Battery St., San Francisco.

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Publications Available

Community Education/Community College Bibliography. . . the fifth in a series of selected bibliographies. . . includes some 160 abstracts of documents from the ***National Multimedia Center for Adult Education***. The materials reviewed are pertinent to the planning, establishment, and/or evaluation of various kinds of community based programs. . . of interest to educators and other professionals working in community education programs or at the community college level. *English as a Second Language, Consumer Education, Career Education,* and *Education for Aging Bibliographies*. . . published earlier. . . are also available. **Each of the five costs $2.80.** Information on obtaining bibliographies, abstracts, newsletters, or other services may be obtained from Dr. Joseph W. Jacques, ***National Multimedia Center, Montclair State College***, 848 Valley Road, Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043.

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Land Control is 1975-76 Debate Topic

Each year the *Library of Congress* issues a suggested *Debate Topic* for colleges and high schools. For 1975-76. . . the ***Library*** has selected the topic: *Resolved: That the Federal Government Should Adopt a Comprehensive Program to Control Land Use in the U.S.* To provide useful source material on this subject. . . the ***HUD Library*** has prepared *A Land Use Resources List*. . . a comprehensive bibliography covering all phases of the subject. . . with special emphasis on community development. Single copies of *A Land Use Resources List* may be obtained without charge from the ***HUD*** Distribution Center, Room B-258, ***HUD*** Building, Washington, D.C. 20410.

New Mortgage Ideas Slow in Coming

Secretary Hills told a recent meeting of the *U.S. League of Savings Associations* that "a remarkably underwhelming response has been received to *HUD's* request for new ideas for mortgage instruments." The request for new ideas was contained in a ***HUD** Request for Proposals* which appeared in the August 18 *Federal Register*. The *RFP*... which was required under the terms of the *Housing and Community Development Act of 1974*... asked for submissions before November 1. Among the subjects for which ideas were solicited and hoped for were suggestions from the public on non-level... or graduated payments on mortgage principal and interest... which would help ***HUD*** establish some experimental mortgage programs.

The Secretary explained that "under the experimental program... it is anticipated that ***HUD*** can provide lenders with an opportunity to prove the value of new forms of mortgages."

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AIA Restructures Honors Program

The *American Institute of Architects* has reorganized its *Institute Honors Program* which recognizes the highest standards of achievement in architecture and related fields.

In previous years... the *Program* awarded medals and citations to individuals and groups in several specific categories. The 1976 program will award identical ***AIA*** medals in five broad categories. Accompanying citations will specify the recipients' achievements and identify the person in whose memory the medal is being given.

The *AIA Medal* will be given to individuals and groups in the following categories:

- Artists and craftsmen whose work is related to architecture: this category would include candidates for the former *Fine Arts Medal and Craftsmanship Medal;*

- Illustrators and recorders of architectural accomplishments: candidates for the former *Architectural Photography Medal,* as well as from the fields of film and television;

- Individuals or organizations who have inspired and influenced the architectural profession: former *Allied Professions Medal, Industrial Arts Medal, Architecture Critics' Medal, AIA Medal for Research, Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation;*

- Individuals or organizations responsible for a specific project related to architecture (a private or government building program, public works project, a single book, etc.): former *Citation of an Organization, Henry Bacon Medal, Architecture Critics' Citation,* and

- Individuals or groups responsible for specific accomplishments demonstrating the integration of several disciplines related to architecture: former *Collaborative Achievement in Architecture Medal.*

In addition to the *Architectural Firm Award* (which is unchanged) no more than 10 awards will be given each year, and no more than three will be given in any one of the five categories.

Further information may be obtained from Nancy Hallmark, Assistant Director, News & Features, *AIA*, 1735 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (202/785-7264).

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REALTORS Elect

Philip C. Smaby... a Minneapolis REALTOR... was elected president of the *National Association of REALTORS* during the *Association's* 68th annual convention in San Francisco. A director of the ***Association*** and a member of its Executive Committee... he is currently serving as first vice president. He also is a former regional vice president of the ***Association***, and a past president of the ***National Institute of Real Estate Brokers***, now ***REALTORS National Marketing Institute***, an ***Association*** affiliate. Before service as first vice president of the ***National Association***, he was ***Association*** treasurer for two terms.

FYI

Northeastern Retail Lumbermens Association. . . 82nd Annual Convention. . . Boston, January 4-6. **Details:** ***NRLA*, 339 East Ave., Rochester, New York 14604.**

University of California-Berkeley Extension and the *UC College of Environmental Design*. . . *Public Sector Housing*. . . San Francisco, January 15-16. Designed for housing and planning professionals, public officials, and others involved in housing policy formulation or implementation, the 2-day program offers an opportunity for in-depth analysis of issues in the housing policy field, with emphasis on current and future application. **Details: City, Regional, and Environmental Planning, *UC Extension*, 2223 Fulton St., Berkeley, CA 94720 (415/642-4811).**

National Association of Home Builders. . . 32nd Annual Convention and Exposition . . . Dallas, January 18-22. **Details:** ***NAHB Convention & Meetings*, 15th & M Sts., N.W., Washington, D.C. (202/452-0420).**

Transportation Research Board. . . Annual Convention. . . January 19-23, Washington, D.C. **Details:** ***TRB*, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418 (202/389-6334).**

Solar Energy Industries Association. . . Workshops. . . Los Angeles, January 24-28. **Details:** ***SEIA*, 1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 632, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/293-1000).**

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Real Estate Management Courses Announced

The Institute of Real Estate Management. . . of the *National Association of REALTORS*. . . **has announced its schedule of management educational courses for 1976.** The classes run from February through November. . . and cover a wide range of subjects in the fields of real estate economics and management techniques and procedures. Classes are scheduled for **Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Honolulu, Houston, Louisville, Orlando, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle,** and **Washington, D.C.,** as well as in the following Canadian cities: **Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnepeg. Full details and registration:** ***IREM*, 155 East Superior Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611 (312/440-8600).**

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